

# Unit Training Management

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*"In no other profession are the penalties for employing  
untrained personnel so appalling or irrevocable as in the  
military"*

General Douglas MacArthur

This statement is as true today as it was in 1940. As leaders we have the responsibility to ensure that our Marines are trained to their full potential so they can deploy tomorrow and accomplish any assigned mission. Increased personnel and operational tempo and decreased funding present commanders with real challenges that directly impact unit readiness. Regardless of these challenges, commanders must continue to meet their mission requirements. To meet these requirements, commanders must first identify exactly what a unit must do to accomplish its wartime mission. Once a unit's wartime capabilities are identified, commanders then apply the Unit Training Management (UTM) principles to the unit's training program.

## Components of UTM

Unit Training Management (UTM) focuses training on the tasks that are essential to a unit's wartime capabilities. UTM is the use of the Systems Approach to Training (SAT) and the Marine Corps Training Principles in a manner that maximizes training results and focuses the training priorities of the unit in preparation for the conduct of its wartime mission.

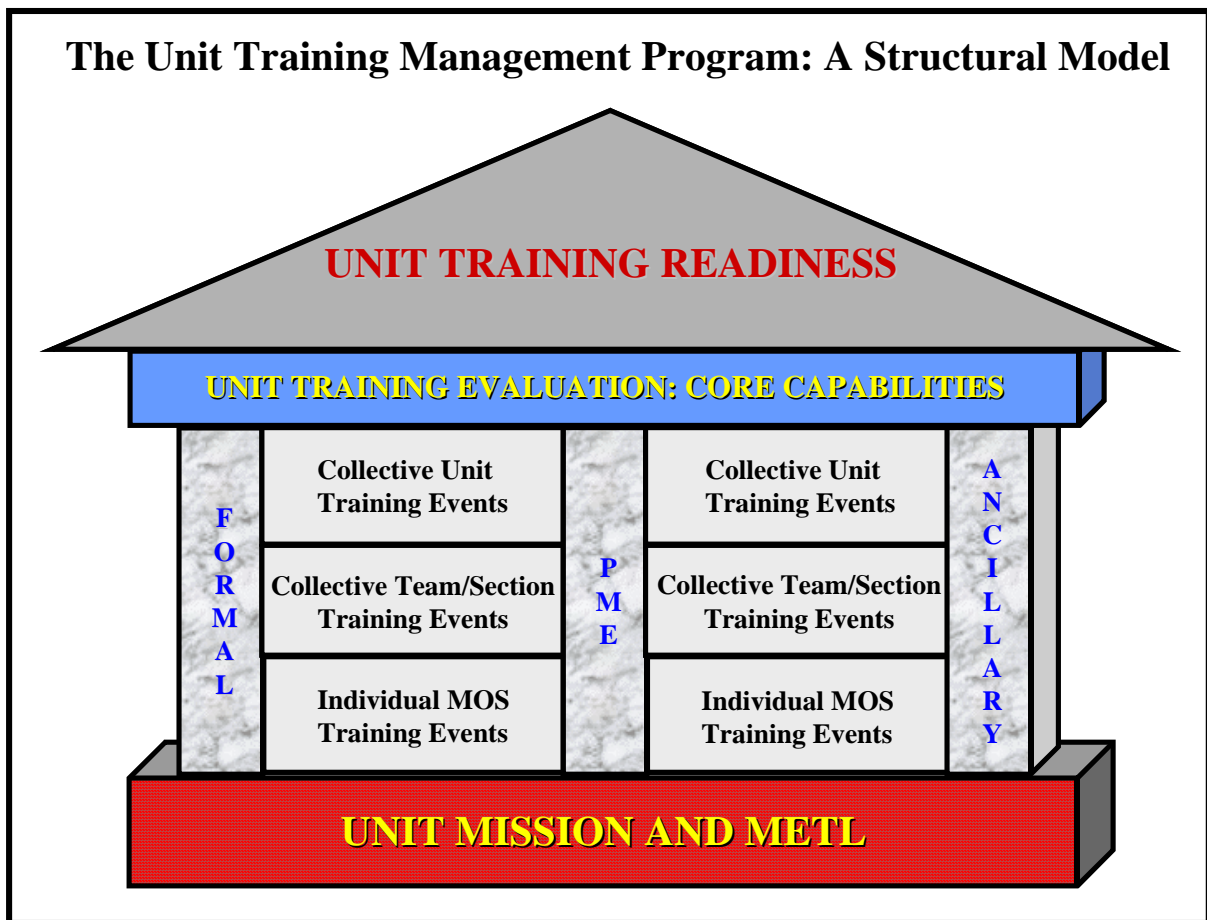


Figure 1

The Marine Corps' unit training management program is built upon a solid foundation consisting of the mission

statement and the Mission Essential Task List (METL) (Figure 1). The METL defines the core tasks that a unit must be capable of performing in a warfighting environment, vice an extensive list of tasks the unit could accomplish if unconstrained by time or resources. This smaller, core list is the result of the commander's analysis and serves as a tool to prioritize and focus unit training. When approved by higher headquarters, the METL becomes the descriptive training document for the unit and provides a clear, warfighting-focused description of the highest-level collective actions needed to execute wartime missions.

The three pillars of the unit training management program are formal training, ancillary training, and Professional Military Education (PME). Formal training encompasses Marine specific training that uniquely distinguishes our service and prepares individuals for basic survival on the battlefield to include: Marine Corps Common Skills, marksmanship, physical fitness, combat water survival, NBC, and leadership training. Ancillary training is training that supports individual readiness such as suicide prevention, standards of conduct, voluntary education, and equal opportunity training. PME is the lifelong study of the foundations of the military profession, and is designed to equip Marines with the knowledge, confidence, and vision to exercise sound decision-making in battle.

Individual and collective training are the next components of the unit's training program. This training is progressive, combat mission-focused, and building-block in nature. Individual MOS training events serve as the cornerstones, and collective events form the progressive blocks building toward unit proficiency in core capabilities and are directly linked to the unit's METL. Combat mission training is the primary focus for unit commanders, but it must be balanced with PME, formal training, and ancillary training. This balanced unit training management program will prepare units for combat-focused training evaluations. Training evaluations are designed to measure proficiency in unit core capabilities.

As the unit's training readiness level increases, its ability to weather the storms of combat and to overcome the fog of war multiplies. Unit training readiness is the roof built upon capstone evaluation, and will fluctuate over time.

### **Training Principles**

Out of the Marine Corps' philosophy of training emerges fundamental principles that are applicable to all levels of training. These principles provide sound and proven direction and are flexible enough to accommodate the demands of local conditions. These principles are not inclusive, nor do they guarantee success. They are guides that commanders can use to manage unit training programs. The Marine Corps training principles are:

### **Marine Corps Training Principles**

- Train as you fight
- Make commanders responsible for training
- Use standards-based training
- Use performance-oriented training
- Use mission-oriented training
- Train the MAGTF to fight as a combined arms team
- Train to sustain proficiency
- Train to challenge

### **Applying the SAT Process for UTM**

The SAT process (Figure 2) provides commanders with the requisite tools and techniques to analyze, design, develop, implement and evaluate the training of their unit. The **Analyze** phase begins with the identification of those tasks that are essential to mission accomplishment. The unit's T/O mission statement, associated contingency and operational plans, doctrine, and the METL of senior and like-units provide most of the information required for the commander's analysis.

Obviously, commanders bring their own experience, training, and judgment to the process of determining the unit's performance objectives. *The end product of this phase is the unit's METL—a descriptive training document*

# Unit Training Management: Applying the SAT process.

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graph TD; Analysis[Analysis] --> Design[Design]; Design --> Develop[Develop]; Develop --> Implement[Implement]; Implement --> Analysis; Evaluate[Evaluate] <--> Analysis; Evaluate <--> Design; Evaluate <--> Develop; Evaluate <--> Implement;
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**Evaluation of core unit capabilities & core individual skills as part of unit exercises. Evaluation results serve as input to the analysis phase**

**Analysis**

**METL developed**

**Conduct training**

**Implement**

**Evaluate**

**Design**

**Identify resources  
Prepare:  
-lesson plans  
- Orders/LOIs  
Train the trainer**

**Develop**

**Lay out training plan:  
- mission oriented  
- performance oriented  
- standards based**

## Figure 2

outlining the warfighting-focused tasks that must be trained to high proficiency. The analysis phase typically concludes at about the 45-day mark in the commander's tenure, but as with the other phases of SAT, it is continuously revisited and revised as necessary.

The **Design** phase commences when the commander and principal staff begin to lay out long-, mid-, and short-range training plans. Long-range plans focus on the major

training exercises or deployments for the next 18-24 months. A critical step in the design phase is to relate collective training standards directly to the unit's METs. The commander must then prioritize the training effort. While the established METs are all essential and, therefore, not themselves prioritized, finite training time and scarce resources demand a well thought-out mid-range 8-12 month training plan.

The short-range 2-4 month training plan normally focuses on the collective and individual training accomplishments of subordinate or lower-echelon units. As such, individual training events are related to the appropriate collective training standard and, ultimately, unit METs.

During the **Develop** phase commanders and their staffs ensure logistical planning, LOI writing, and final preparation of the trainers is accomplished. The three preparatory phases--Analyze, Design, and Develop--are completed when the LOI and exercise plans are added to the established METL and training plans. The unit is finally prepared to conduct well-ordered, mission-oriented training.

Training is conducted during the **Implement** phase. Commanders and their unit training managers stage the resources and personnel and conduct the planned training. It is imperative that both the trainers and Marines being trained have a clear understanding of the training objectives and standards. Combat training takes many forms,

but as long as it is clearly linked back to the unit's METL, the goal of the instruction, demonstration, or practical application will never be lost.

Finally, the **Evaluate** phase is the continuous process that provides feedback for improvement. Has the training met the predetermined expectations? Is the unit better able to accomplish its mission? How can we improve training? Trainers can determine this by comparing actual performance to standards listed for each event or task. Checklists and other performance support tools can be applied and should also be tied directly back to the unit's METL. Detailed after action reviews should also be employed to determine better means for accomplishing objectives.

#### **Marine Corps Ground Training and Readiness (T&R) Program**

With the signing of MCO P3500.72, the Marine Corps Ground Training and Readiness (T&R) Program became policy. The purpose of the Marine Corps Ground T&R Program is to provide the commander with standardized syllabi for all occupational fields within the ground combat, combat support, and combat service support communities. The T&R Program serves as a single reference for all individual and collective training. T&R is evolving to incorporate and replace the Individual Training Standards (ITS), the Mission Performance Standards (MPS) of the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Standards (MCCRES), the Maintenance Training Management and Evaluation Program (MATMEP). Marines training as a team to perform in combat is the heart



of the T&R Program. T&R systematizes commonly accepted skills, is open to innovative change, and above all, tailors the training effort to the unit's METL. The T&R Program provides the focus and standardization that enable commanders to train their units in accordance with the training principles more efficiently and more effectively. The Marine Corps' T&R Program is built upon the following tenets:

**T&R Program Tenets**

- Building block approach to training.
- Training events are linked to expected combat missions (MET's).
- Focus on Unit Core Capabilities and Individual Core Skills.
- Organization of tasks into executable events.
- Sustainment of training.
- Evaluation of training readiness.

T&R events serve as the central components of the program and are developed by Subject Matter Experts (SME) from the operating forces, supporting establishment, and other stakeholders. These events are organized in a Task-Condition-Standard format and include a Combat Readiness Percentage (CRP) and a Sustainment Interval.

The CRP is a quantitative numerical value used in calculating individual and collective training readiness. The CRP value for each event is determined by that event's overall importance within the training syllabus for that unit, occupational specialty, or billet. The Sustainment Interval is a period, expressed in number of months, between evaluation or retraining requirements. Skills and capabilities acquired through the accomplishment of T&R events are to be refreshed at pre-determined intervals. Those intervals must be adhered to in order for Marines and units to maintain proficiency.

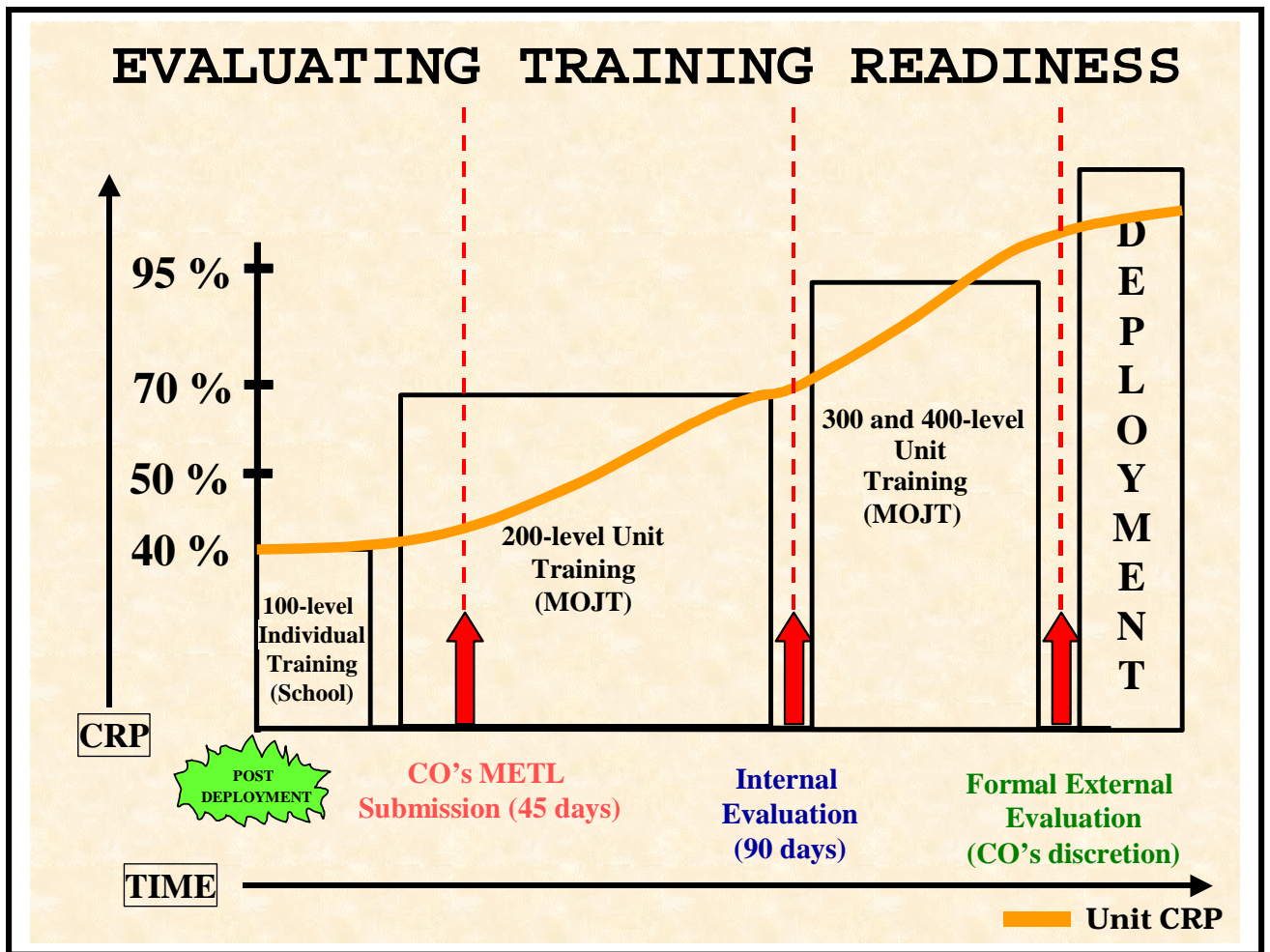
**T&R Assessment/Evaluation:**

Training assessments provide commanders with a process to measure (through the use of CRP) the unit's ability to perform events and specified in the respective T&R manuals. This evaluation process is often scenario-based, focuses on the unit's METL, and uses collective training standards as the criteria to assess unit proficiency. Unlike the previous forms of training evaluations, the T&R evaluation process is continuous. Training evaluation is integral to training management and is conducted by leaders at every level.

As the Marine Corps implements T&R as the foundation for unit training, the current MCCRES will transition from a checklist-based evaluation of training to a continuous MET-based evaluation of training. As part of this transition, ALMAR 045/02 directs commanders within 45 days of assuming

command, to review, update, and submit the unit's METL to the next higher headquarters for approval. Within 90 days the commander must conduct an internal assessment of the unit's ability to execute each MET and prepare a definitive plan of attack to achieve MET proficiency.

Training assessment is simplified by utilization of the T&R Program. The unit conducts training and enters the results of that training into an automated computer program similar to the current Automated Training and Readiness Information System (ATRIMS) already in use. The individual and collective CRP is computed and the result is a continuously updated system for determining where the unit stands with respect to its METL. At any point in time a commander can print the status of the individual and collective training accomplishments of a unit. The purpose of recording individual and unit CRP is not to provide a report card or to instill a checklist mentality, rather, it provides a means to credit training accomplishment and plan future training. A CRP is a quicklook metric for displaying the unit's training status, but is not required to perform evaluations. Formal evaluations by a unit's higher headquarters (at a time in the unit's training cycle determined by that unit commander) can, and should be, conducted to ensure that the unit's METL and the unit's training plan correspond. This training evaluation timeline is shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3**

### UTM Support Tools

A number of UTM support tools are available. TECOM produces and conducts biennial UTM training for all operating forces. The training, conducted by a Mobile Training Team (MTT) from TECOM is announced via Naval Message, and is attended by commanders and their staffs at all levels. TECOM is in the process of revising the interactive UTM CD and will provide copies to all operating forces down to the battalion level in FY-03. A UTM website

is available at <http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/utm/> and contains all pertinent directives, lesson plans, and links to a wide variety of training resources. Current references pertaining to UTM include: the SAT Manual; MCO 1553.3, Marine Corps Unit Training Management; MCRP 3-0A, Unit Training Management Guide; MCRP 3-0B, How to Conduct Training; and MCO P3500.72, Ground T&R Program Order.

### **Conclusion**

UTM governs the major peacetime training activity of the Marine Corps and applies to all echelons of the Total Force. It guides commanders in the development of a METL, which details the specific tasks a unit must be able to accomplish in combat. It is also the process that combines the Marine Corps Training Principles with SAT to ensure that MET's are incorporated into the unit's training plan. The T&R program maximizes training results by focusing a unit's training priorities on the accomplishments of its wartime mission.

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